The Myrtle

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

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For the Myrtle.

My Prayer.

DEAR Lord I pray Thee, in deep grief
To help me be more pure within:
To give me aid, when help I need
To overcome and crush all sin.

I am so weak dear Lord, I fall
Before I know the tempter's near:
It seems I weaker grow each day
I never shall be strong, I fear.

In sore distress on Thee I call;
And try with my weak heart to pray;
Oh! Lord, dear Lord, reach me thy hand
And guide me to a better way.

I long to nobler, purer grow,
To cleanse my soul from ev'ry stain,
And thou wilt give the he'p I need,
My prayer to Thee will not be vain;

For Thou hast said, "come unto me
All ye that heavy laden are:"
And who so sadly weighed as they
Whose hearts are pressed with sinful care.

So will I often pray to Thee,
For I am stronger after prayer:
And try to make my soul so pure
That thy sweet Spirit will dwell there.

Clara L. Putnam.

Riches and Health.

"A man in his carriage was riding along,
A gayly-dressed wife by his side;
In satin and lace she looked like a queen,
And he like a king in his pride.

A wood-sawyer stood on the street as they passed:
The carriage and couple he eyed;
And he said, as he worked with his saw on a log,
'I wish I was rich and could ride.'

The man in his carriage remarked to his wife;
'One thing I would give if I could;
I would give all my wealth for the strength and the health
Of the man that is sawing the wood.'"

The Dayspring.

For the Myrtle.

Nellie's Composition.

"O dear," said Nellie Briggs as she came from school, and threw her books on the lounge in her mother's room; "I do think it is too bad. Miss Dean told us to-night, we must write compositions for to-morrow. I don't know what to write, and she told us she should *insist* upon our handing them in, in the morning. Can't you help me mamma?"

The lady sitting by the window quietly looked up, and smiling said, "If my daughter will shut the door, put her books away in place, and hang her hat and shawl where they belong, perhaps then I will see what I can do to assist my little girl."

Nellie blushed at having to be reminded to put her things in place (and mamma did have to tell her to shut the door very often) and after doing as she was bidden, took a stool, and sat down by her mother.

"Now, mother, what shall I write? Miss Dean told us she would let us choose our own subjects, but I don't think I can write any easier, for I cannot think of anything to write about."

"You have not chosen a subject then?"

"No, ma'am, Lizzie May is going to write about the country, and Mary Hasty about flowers; but I have never been in the country enough to write anything about it, and flowers I know nothing about, only that they are pretty. Mary has been studying botany, and I suppose that is the reason she chose the subject."

"Well, let me think. Supposing you take hair. I think you could write something about that."

"Why, mother, what a funny subject! What could I say about it? I might say I wore mine braided, and it pulls awfully every time I have it combed." And Nellie laughed heartily.

Her mother smiled but said; "Do you remember the account your father and I read the other evening, about how they obtained false hair in France? Many people suppose the switches and braids we see in the shop windows, come directly from the heads of young girls; but in reality many of them are made from *combings*. Do you remember how my hair came out in the spring, after my sickness, and how I used to save it? Well it is from just such combings much of the false hair is obtained; only the greater portion of it is picked out of the mud and dirt of the street.

Men make it their sole business, picking hair, as we have ragpickers in New York. These pickings are sold to what are called hair manufacturers. They take the hair in this filthy state, and first rub it in sawdust, to remove the mud and dirt, after which it is combed out with a sort of iron card. This operation has to be performed very carefully, to prevent breaking the hair, for the longer it is the more valuable. After this it is divided into different lengths, and the roots all placed at the top, and lastly it has to be divided into the separate colors and shades. This last operation is done by hand, and is partly the reason of the high price of hair."

"Oh mother! does it seem possible any one can have the patience to do all that. I don't think I shall ever want to wear false hair. I should always be thinking of the hair pickers."

"Well Nellie, do you think you can think of any thing to write for your composition to-morrow?"

"Oh yes ma'am! I think I can write quite a composition; but mother, can you tell me how much our hair grows in a year?"

"I think I have read it does not exceed four inches on an average. But come, Nellie, I should like to have you attend to your composition now, as I am busy and cannot spare time to talk longer."

"Yes, mamma, and thank you very much for helping me to find a subject."

And Nellie set about her task, which was soon finished. She felt very happy the next morning when she handed her composition to her teacher and received her smile of approval for her promptness.

M. L. H.

Flying Music-Boxes.

"HOLLO!" said Willie Burke and Charles Flynn to Jamie. "Come along with us: we are going to have fun; we have got our pockets full of stones, and we are going to kill birds with them. It is the best fun in the world."

Now, Jamie was a thoughtless little fellow; and when another boy asked him to do a thing, at it he went at once, without so much as thinking whether it was right or not; so he filled his pockets with stones, and began running and shouting with the other boys.

"Hollo! there's a chirping bird," said one, "I'll hit him." "Look at that robin," bawled another: "send a stone at him." I am happy to say that these boys missed their aim generally; for their intentions were much worse than they had skill to execute.

Now, Jamie's mother had been sitting at her window watching the whole affair; and she stood up, and called in a very quiet way, "Jamie, come up here: I have something to show you."

Jamie went up to his mother's room, all panting and hot, and began, "Mamma, what do you want to show me?" She washed his heated face and hands, and then took from a drawer a small black box which she wound up with a key like a watch-key. As soon as the box was set down, it began to play a most beautiful tune, and Jamie was astonished and delighted.

"What a curious box!" said he. "Who made it?"

"I do not know," said his mother; "but why do you think it is curious?"

"Why, it is curious to see a musical instrument shut up in such a little box. Why, I could carry this about in my pocket. I wish it was mine: I'd set it going, and put it in my pocket some day; and then I would make the boys stare."

"But," said his mother, "if you thlnk it is strange to see a musical instrument put in a little box, what would you think if I could tell you of one which was put in a bird's throat?"

"In a bird's throat!" said Jamie: "who ever heard of such a thing?"

"Well," answered his mother, "there is a boy in this room who has been listening this morning to a little instrument which is inside of

bird's throat, and which can make sweeter music than this box, and yet he did not seem to wonder at it at all."

Jamie looked wonderingly at his mother.

"When you went into the fields, did you not hear the linnets and thrushes playing on little instruments in their throats, and making all sorts of sweet sounds? Look now at your little canary-bird hanging in the window, and see when he sings how his throat trembles."

"Oh! I know what you mean now," said Jamie: "you mean my little canary-bird is like a music-box. Well, but what sort of an instrument has he got in his throat? I'm sure I don't know."

"Why, he has a little, fine, soft flute, that can play as many notes as a piano."

"A flute in his throat!" said Jamie, laughing. "What a funny thing!"

"It is even so," said his mother. "The little pipe through which the canary-bird plays his tune is more curiously made than any flute which any instrument-maker ever formed,—it is so small, yet so perfect. It is made of elastic rings, and fits into his throat so easily as never to interrupt his eating or breathing; and it turns whichever way he bends his head. Now, did you ever hear of any musical instrument that was as curious as this?"

"Well, it is so strange!" said Jamie; "I might have heard a bird sing a month, and never have thought of all this."

"And yet, Jamie, little boys go out into the woods and fields, which God has filled with beautiful trees and flowers, and with hundreds of little happy birds, all so curiously and beautifully made, and amuse themselves with throwing stones at them, and killing them."

The Little Lantern.

A very young child may be useful. A small lantern, well lighted, is of much service; while a very large lantern, without any light in it, is of no use. And who knows how many the light from a child's lantern will reach and benefit? Do not be dark lanterns, or such as give no light; but as you pass along through life, show that you love the truth, and that you seek by God's grace to walk as you are taught in His holy word. Show it by a cheerful, loving, honest walk. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father in heaven."—*Children's Friend.*

The Year's Harvest.

SPRING had buds and tender leaves,
Blue violets and sweet May-flowers;
Dear little birds sat neath the caves,
And sang through forest bowers.

The little brooklets found their way
Through the meadows once again:
Their joyous song now seemed to say,
We have broken the icy chain.

Summer clothed the forest trees
With mantles rich and bright;
O! what pleasure nature yields—
It fills the heart with pure delight.

The pencil dipped in heavenly dew,
Gently touches the opening flowers;
That pencil so divine and true,
Is painting this brief life of ours.

Autumn brings a harvest sweet,
Of golden fruit from bending trees;
Summer's promise now complete,
A large fulfillment yields.

But is this all that we have gained?
All the wealth the year has brought?
Have our hearts with sin been stained,
Or have we the Saviour sought?

When our hearts the record show,
May it be of noble words or deed;
O! let us not forget to sow
The pure, the goodly seed.

We may wipe the falling tear—
Gather up the withered leaves,
Then the harvest of the year
Will bring us golden sheaves

The Little Sower.

Little Hattie's Prayer.

THE Sabbath sun rose in splendor. The children were very happy that morning; for somehow it had leaked out through the night that there would be a Sabbath School Christmas tree on Wednesday evening.

Mamma explained to them what Christmas means, and told them to ask God to help them keep his dear Sabbath holy, and not think too much about "the tree" and "the presents." If they would honor God, he would make them have all the happier Christmas.

Soon little Hattie took papa's hand, and went away to say her prayer, which we give in her own words:—

"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Oh! please, dear Jesus, 'b'ess the Kismas-t'ee,' and let all the folks have a nice time, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

She asked the Lord for what she most desired, and came away satisfied and happy. Sabbath passed very pleasantly. *The Well-Spring.*

For the Myrtle.

Kitten Silly.

KITTEN Silly comes and goes
At everybody's call.
Tortoise-Kitty, pinky-toes,
She's the pet of all.

Kitten Silly entertains
All our parlor guests,
Acts as if on her small pains
All the burden rests.

Flirts the tassel, rolls the ball,—
Fingers, feet are hers,
Plays with cane and parasol,
Everything that stirs.

Springs and dances, none knows why,
Watches, none sees what,
Takes a fancy round to fly
For a tail that's never caught.

In our arms delights to creep
Purry, furry ball,
Cuddles down and goes to sleep
So forgets it all.

Kitten Silly, why can't you stay
Always and always thus,
Just this little bunch of play
Loving and pleasing us.

It really grieves my heart, I own,
Just to think of that—
Think you're going to spoil so soon,
Into a sober cat!

H. A. B.

For the Myrtle.

Festival Flowers.

THERE was going to be a grand festival of Sunday Schools held in the city hall on a certain anniversary day, and, the country schools in the vicinity were invited to be present. All schools were also requested to furnish as many flowers as possible for decorations. And as that was all that was asked of them each child felt a great desire to do something in the way of flowers.

In all the out-of-town places, so near the city, flowers seemed plenty. There were green-houses, and house-conservatories and gardens, and little flower plants in the door-yard. But there were many, many children after all, who had not a flower to carry, not even a rose on the window-sill, that could be stolen from the dreary room to make a little bit of the great beauty and brightness. Three sisters I know of—little girls who worked in a shop half the time and went to school the other half—were of this number.

This festival was going to be a gala-day for them: and they were greatly interested in their Sunday School, too, and wanted it should do itself credit. But what should they do for flowers? All the girls of their classes had flowers at home and would carry them. But they had none, and no money to buy any. Their parents did not go to church at all, and would have thought it great folly for them to spend money for flowers to give away at a Sunday School festival, or even to wear to it. So they had no sympathy in their troubles at home.

"I know what we can do," said Elsie one night, after they were packed away in their one bed; I know what we could do, if we only had time. We could get wild flowers. There are lots of them down by the Main woods, Mayflowers and all.

"That's so," said Sarah, "if we only *could* get them, and make them up pretty, they'd do to tuck around in the corners, I guess."

"Couldn't we send anybody?" said Clara.

"Who is there to send?" said Sarah, the oldest. And as she was generally the wisest, there was never much to be said after she had spoken.

By and by she spoke again. "I'll tell you," said she eagerly, "let's hurry to-morrow and get a good day's work done by the middle of the

afternoon; and then I'll ask Mr. White to let us go after wild-flowers for the Festival. He belongs to our school and he'll let us, I know."

"Oh, Sarah, you don't dare!" cried Clara.

"Just see if I don't."

"Mother won't like it," Elsie whispered.

"She won't care, if Mr. White pays us just the same. And he will."

That was just what was done.

Mr. White was very goodnatured at the day's work and readily let them go. Their mother was very glad to have them get a breath of fresh air, and had their baskets ready at the door. How they scampered away to the fields by the Main woods!

Blue violets, wild-peas, Benjamin-blossoms, anemones, Mayflowers all sorts of those delicate wind-flowers of the spring grew along the brook, and in the corners of the fences, and the warm little dells. But they were fine and small and the girls feared much. By the time their baskets were full, their spirits were not half as light as before.

"They'll all wilt before morning," sighed Elsie.

"And they can't be seen half across the hall," said Clara, they're poor pale little things. Think of them alongside of roses!"

"Never mind," said Sarah, "its all we can do." And then she laughed a brave little laugh. "Angels could do no more, you know."

Their mother really got quite interested and helped them put their flowers carefully in water, and then make up their bouquets in the morning. And finally she thought she would go to the Festival too. So that good came through the flowers, if there had been no other.

But you shall see whether there was no other.

Clara and Sarah and Elsie carried in their little bunches of wild-flowers, and they did look pale and small enough to be sure, beside the roses and geraniums. They did not dare give them to anybody, but were going to tuck them in some big vases nearly out of sight.

But a young lady of the committee,—who, by the way, belonged to the flower-mission and knew what she wanted to save for that—spied those shy little clusters and took them in hand at once.

"Oh, how lovely!" she cried. "How delicate, how sweet! Whoever brought these?" and she went around just touching them to everybody's nose. These musn't be wasted in any poor place. I wonder where we'll put them.

They glanced around "Oh, those little silver vases on the speaker's desk,—just the thing. Up above all the hot-house things, that's just where they ought to go,—where they'll be seen close to. Mayflowers in one, violets in the other. I wonder if any of these great guns of ministers will notice them and be glad they are here!"

The girls wondered so, too, with a strong new thrill at their hearts. They were glad they had brought the wild-flowers. And they were gladder still when a distinguished man, they had often heard of but never seen before, in making his beautiful talk to the children took up the little vase of Mayflowers and then of violets in his hands and told almost with tears in his eyes, how many long years it had been since he had seen these dear flowers of home, and how they brought back the woods he had loved when a child like them, and thanked the children whoever they might be, who had brought a bit of this lost freshness and beauty back to him. Then they felt paid for their little part in the festival flowers.

H. A. B.

TRUTH is not always won by long and hard toil. A moment's insight is sometimes worth a life's experience.

Jimmie's Second Letter.

DEAR father, you always reproved me,
For ta'king, with nothing to say;
But I hardly believe this long letter
Will meet with that censure to-day.

You thought that I soon would grow weary
Of life upon grandfather's farm,
But father, each morn seems more blessed,
Each evening has added a charm.

You should hear how the creatures all thank us
For the care and the food we bestow—
No angry word ever is spoken,
They ne'er fee' the pain of a blow.

Grandpa thinks that the love of the Maker.
Makes *us* gentle and loving to all
The creatures that He has created,
From the great, to the insect most small.

The boys will cry out, "What a baby!"
When I tell you the trout in the brook
Looked so handsome and happy in freedom,
That I never once threw in my hook.

I gave them the earth-worms I'd gathered,
And to me 'twas a far greater treat
To see them dart through the cool water,
Than struggling in death at my feet.

I wondered why grandpa was taking
His corn-basket, fishing for trout,
But a'ter I'd rolled up my fish-line,
The curious secret was out.

He knew where the chestnuts were falling,
For last night King Frost was around
Prying open the caskets that held them,
And like jewels they covered the ground.

The red squirrels chattered for certain,
And scolded because we would stay?
There was plenty left high in the tree-tops,
So we claimed all that fell in our way.

The wild grapes are ripe on the hill side,
Large fox grapes, purple, and white;
White hazelnuts, walnuts, and shagbarks,
Make me quite shout aloud with delight.

I *know* I'm cut out for a farmer
Grandpapa, too, thinks 'tis true,
And so if you'll give me to grandpa
'Twould really be better for you;

For, father, you've Jakey, and Thomas,
And Freddie, and Bennie, and Joe,
And Jennie, and Hattie, and Mary,
And Sallie, and dear baby Zoe;

I'm sure that makes quite a house full,
To raise up for lawyers and priests,
And merchants, and doctors, and schoolma'am's,
And you'd scarcely miss me in the least.

And grandpa will send me to college—
A book farmer's *never* a drudge,
For knowledge is power the world over;
Many a farmer's as wise as a judge.

But, father, your wisdom shall guide me,
I'll abide by your loving decree—
Though my heart is most anxiously longing
A farmer lad henceforth to be.

Our Sunday Schools.

MASSACHUSETTS.

—The Sunday School connected with the Columbus Ave. church closed a series of entertainments for the winter, on May 20th, with a special entertainment as a "Souvenir" of the 25th anniversary of Dr. Miner's settlement of the parish—his "silver wedding" with his people. The entertainment was opened by the children of the infant class, who, all in white, brought their bouquets of flowers and with appropriate recitation wrought them nto a prepared frame surrounding the pastors portrait so as to form a beautiful motto all in green and white flowers. After these "little weavers" came presentations, from the school, the Bible class, the Ballou Literary Association and others. The gifts were a bronze statuette of Franklin, bronze mantle ornaments in statuette vases, a study chair, a set of Mrs. Jamison's writings on sacred art, elegantly bound, two valuable oil paintings, and a watch and chain from the ladies to the pastor's wife. Presentation speeches and replies were thickly interspersed. Afterwards an original operatto, "The allegory of the Bees," was sung and performed by young ladies of the school. The entertainment was opened and closed by hymns written for the occasion by teachers of the school. Altogether it was one of the most enjoyable occasions in the history of the school.

MAINE.

—A friend from Mechanics Falls writes thus to the *Banner*; "Last Sabbath being the anniversary of our Sabbath School, we proceeded to celebrate the day by a general convocation of all our friends and neighbors of different denominations and had a very pleasant and enjoyable occasion.

We will not enter into detail, but would only say that if the same spirit could be extended throughout christendom which was manifested on this occasion, the millenium would be near at hand, for harmony is one of the first demands of nature when *peace* is required.

The Sabbath School elected Hon. A. C. Denison Supt. for the ensuing year. Bro. S. W. Showles assist.; Bro. F. C. Whitehouse Secretary and Treasurer. Our School is in a flourishing condition, as you know.

—At Saco and Biddeford the School is flourishing. Of the thirty members received into the church during the year many have been from the School. Sunday evening concerts have been frequently held by the School to great interest and profit. The young people have also held a number of entertainments during the winter which have reflected great credit on them, as well as added to their pecuniary means of usefulness.

—Westbrook Seminary has its Commencement in the third week in June. It graduates a larger class than ever before—20 young ladies and gentlemen. Ex-governor Woodbury of Portland gives the oration and Mrs. Elizabeth Akers Allen—"Florence Percy,"—of New York, but formerally of Maine, gives the poem.

The Children's Meeting.

The annual Children's Meeting under the auspices of the Sunday School Union will be held in Tremont Temple on Wednesday of next week,—Anniversary Week. We shall hope to give our readers the whole story next week. But we can say now that it will be a grand meeting; for Dr. Miner, Rev. J. Smith Dodge Jr., and Rev. E. C. Bolles are to make the speeches, and we learn also that as a special novelty, a young lady violinist from Bohemia, M'le Brocsil,—whom we personally know to be as beautiful in person and spirit as her playing is excellent—will delight the children with a violin solo in imitation of the songs of birds. May a bright day and a large attendance of interested friends smile upon the Children's Meeting!

The Bowie Knife and Bible.

When, during the rebellion, a company of Pennsylvania soldiers was attacked by a Baltimore mob, a fearful onset was made upon one man in the ranks, by the rioters. He was three times wounded by the thrust of bowie knives, though not mortally. A fourth thrust was made by a powerful arm, driving a huge knife directly at his heart. Over that heart lay a Bible, which the pious soldier had stowed away in his breast coat pocket, on leaving home, determined to carry it there through the campaign, when not in use reading. The point of the knife was driven two thirds through the Bible. Before another blow could be struck, he was able to make his escape, he knew not how. Thus the Bible, which he was determined to make the "man of his counsel," proved his shield and salvation in the day of battle. It will prove a defence and salvation to many others, if they will but bind it to their hearts and make it their constant counsellor. It will save them from wrong habits and sins which are worse than any bowie knives or bullets can be.

The Deluge.

An English gentleman, Mr. George Smith, of the British Museum, has just been making remarkable discoveries on some Assyrian monuments. He finds a long account of the Deluge, of which we read in Genesis. The account is put as a narrative into the mouth of Xisuthrus or Noah. He relates the wickedness of the world, the command to build the ark, its building, the filling of it, the Deluge, the resting of the ark on a mountain, the sending out of the birds, and other matters. The narrative has a closer resemblance to the account transmitted by the Greeks from Berosus, the Chaldean historian, than to the Biblical history, but it does not differ materially from either. The principal differences are as to the duration of the Deluge, the name of the mountain on which the ark rested, the sending out of the birds &c. It is said that this is the first time any inscription has been found with an account of an event mentioned in Genesis.

Come to Stay.

Young scholar in the Sunday School: if you have lately entered it, resolve on this at once, that you have come to stay. Some foolish boys and girls think, when they get to be fourteen or sixteen years old, that they have outgrown the Sunday School; that it may answer for younger ones than themselves, but that they have now become more interested in other things, and must leave the School. There can be no greater mistake than this. You can never need the Sunday School and its influences more in all your lives than between the ages of fourteen and twenty. Come, then, into the School to stay there; to grow up from a scholar to a teacher and to be a worker, somehow, in it, always. Go to the Sunday School as long as you live.

——Mr. Stephens, in his "Incidents of Travel," mentions that the tomb-stones in the Turkish burying-grounds are all flat, and contain little hollows which hold the water after a rain, and attract the birds, who resort thither to slake their thirst and sing amongst the trees.

Lives of the Apostles.

LESSON XII — JAMES THE SON OF ZEBEDEE.

Question. — Who were called to the apostleship, next after Andrew and Peter?

Answer. — Mark i. 19.

Q. — What attracted the attention of James and John to Jesus?

A. — Luke v. 6, 9, 10.

Q. — What were the two brothers and their father doing at this time?

A. — Mark i. 19.

Q. — What did they do when Jesus called them?

A. — Mark i. 20.

Q. — Who was one of the three apostles that were permitted to witness the raising of the daughter of Jairus?

A. — Luke viii. 51.

Q. — Who was one of the three apostles who were present at the transfiguration of Christ?

A. — Matt. xvii. 1.

Q. — Who was one of the three to witness Christ's agony?

A. — Matt. xxvi. 37.

Q. — Jesus surnamed Simon, Peter. What surname did he give to James and John?

A. — Mark iii. 17.

NOTE. This name seems to have been given them on account of their quick, fiery temper But later in life we find John calm and gentle, with his passionate nature in complete subjection. And what was true of John, was doubtless also true of James. And this calm earnestness into which he grew under the influence of Christ, may have given to James that boldness which made him the first martyr of the apostolic company.

Q. — On what occasion did their hasty passion show itself?

A. — Luke ix, 51.

Q. — What did the Samaritans refuse to do, when they found that Jesus and his disciples were going to Jerusalem?

A. — Luke ix. 52, 53.

Q. — When the people of the Samaritan village refused to sell or give food to Jesus and his company, what did James and John desire?

A. — Luke ix. 54.

Q. — What did Jesus say to them?

A. — Luke ix. 55, 56.

Q. — What did the mother of James and John request for her two sons!

A. — Matt. xx. 20, 21.

Q. — What did James and John say respecting this?

A. — Mark x. 35.

NOTE. They supposed Jesus was to be an earthly king, and they desired the places of authority and power next to him.

Q. — We hear nothing more of James until what time?

A. — Acts i. 13. 14.

Q. — In what way did James die?

A. — Acts xii. 1, 2.

NOTE, This Herod was the grandson of the Herod who ordered the destruction of the children in order to secure the death of the infant Jesus. And he seems to have had no purpose in killing James, than to obtain the favor of the Jews.

From this lesson, we have learned that James was held in high regard by Christ and his brother disciples, and that he remained faithful even unto death.

Hidden Seed

Enigma.

1. A man whom David slew.
2. The prophet who rebuked David.
3. The first murderer.
4. A place where there was a church.
5. The father of the Edomites.
6. Paul's son in the gospel.
7. A prophet who wrote a book.
8. The prophet who could be bribed.
9. The final letter of a prophetic book.

The whole, the writer's other name.

D. O. Uno.

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